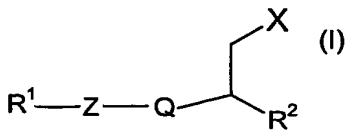
Claims

1. A compound of formula (I):



wherein

R^1 represents optionally substituted -C_{4-12} alkyl, -C_{2-10}alkylcycloalkyl, -C_{2-6} alkyl heterocycloalkyl, -C_{2-6}alkylaryl, optionally substituted 5- or 6- membered aryl or heteroaryl except pyridinyl;

Z represents a bond, CH_2, O, S, SO, SO_2, NR^4, OCR^4R^5, CR^4R^5O, or Z, R^1 and Q together form an optionally substituted fused tricyclic group;

Q represents an optionally substituted 5- or 6- membered aryl or heteroaryl ring;

X represents COR^3;

R^2 represents $CONH_2$, CO_2H, CO_2R^7, SO_2R^7 or $SO_2NR^8R^9$ except that R^2; may not represent CO_2R^7 when X is $CONH_2$;

R^3 represents OR^6, or NR^8R^9;

R^4 and R^5 each independently represents H, C_{1-6} alkyl or C_{1-4} alkylaryl;

R^6 represents H or C_{1-6} alkyl;

R^7 represents C_{1-6} alkyl;

R^8 and R^9 each independently represents H or C_{1-6} alkyl or R^8 and R^9 together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached form a 5- or 6- membered ring which may optionally include 1 or more further heteroatoms selected from O, S and N; and physiologically functional derivatives thereof with the exception of

[3-(acetylamino)-4-cyclohexylphenyl]-butanedioic acid and 3-(acetylamino)-4-cyclohexylphenyl]-butanedioic acid diethyl ether;

butanedioic acid [3-methoxy-4-(phenylmethoxy)phenyl];

butanedioic acid [4-(phenylmethoxy)phenyl];

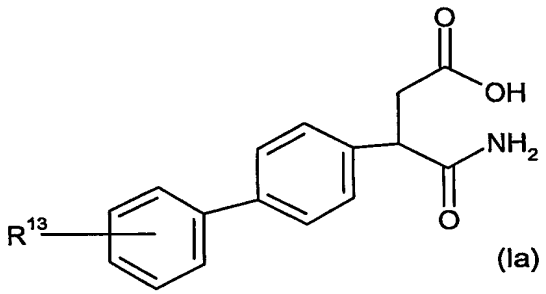
with the proviso that when R^1 represents C_{4-12} alkyl, Z is other than a bond, O or CH_2,and physiologically functional derivatives thereof.

2. A compound as claimed in claim 1 wherein X represents CO_2H and R^2 represents $CONH_2$.

3. A compound as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 wherein Q represents unsubstituted phenyl.

4. A compound as claimed in any of claims 1 to 3 wherein Z represents a bond or O.

5. A compound as claimed in any of claims 1 to 4 of formula (Ia)



(Ia)

wherein R^{13} represents H, halo, CF_3, $-OCF_3$, cyano, nitro, OR^{14}, SR^{15} or COR^{16};
R^{14}, R^{15}, R^{16} independently represent H, C_{1-6} alkyl or C_{1-4} alkylaryl;
and physiologically functional derivatives thereof.

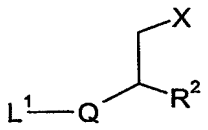
6. A compound as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5 for use in medicine.

7. A method for the treatment of a human or animal subject suffering from or susceptible to an inflammatory disease or an autoimmune disorder which method comprises administering to said subject an effective amount of a compound as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5.

8. The use of a compound as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5 for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of an inflammatory disease or an autoimmune disorder.

9. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier therefor, and optionally one or more other therpeutic agents.

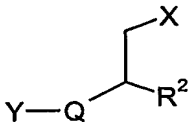
10. a process for the preparation of compounds of formula (I) as defined in claim 1 which process comprises:
(A) for preparing a compound of formula (I) wherein Z represents a bond and R^1 represents optionally substituted 5- or 6- membered aryl or heteroaryl, reacting a compound of formula (II):



(II)

wherein R^2, Q and X are as previously defined for formula (I) and L^1 represents a leaving group, with a reagent suitable to introduce the group R^1, such as a compound $R^1B(OH)_2$; or

(B) (i) preparation of compounds of formula (I) wherein Z represents , O, S, SO, SO_2, NR^4, OCR^4R^5 by reacting a compound of formula (III):



(III)

wherein R^2, Q and X are as previously defined for formula (I) and Y represents OH, SH, NHR^4, $HOCR^4R^5$ with a compound of formula (IV)

$$R^1L^2 \qquad \text{(IV)}$$

wherein R^1 is defined above for compounds of formula (I) and L^2 represents a leaving group; and

(ii) where Y is -SH optionally followed by oxidation to the corresponding SO or SO_2 as required; or

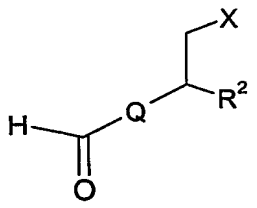
(C) preparing compounds of formula (I) wherein Z is $-CR^4R^5O-$ by reaction of a compound of formula (III) wherein Y is –OH with a compound of formula (V)

$$R^1CR^4R^5L^3 \qquad (V)$$

wherein R^1 R^4, R^5 are defined above for compounds of formula (I) and L^3 represents a leaving group;

(D) preparing compounds of formula (I) where Z is CH_2 and R^1 represents optionally substituted 5- or 6- membered aryl or heteroaryl by reacting

(i) a compound of formula (VII)



(VI)

wherein

Q, X and R^2 are as defined above with an optionally substituted 5- or 6-membered aryl or heteroaryl nucleophile, for example, a compound of formula (VII);

$$R^{17}—A—M$$

(VII)

wherein A is a 5- or 6- membered aryl or heteroaryl, R^{17} is H or one or more substituents, which have been described earlier in the specification, and M is a metal, for example, Mg, Li or MgLi; and

(ii) reduction and elimination of the resultant alcohol or;

(E) deprotection of a protected form of compounds of formula (I).